


**REMARKS**

Please enter the above amendments prior to consideration of the merits of the present application.

A copy of the amended portion of the specification with changes marked therein is attached and entitled "*Version with Markings to Show Changes Made.*"

Respectfully submitted,

Hideki MATSUSHIMA et al.

By 

Dhiren R. Odedra  
Registration No. 41,227  
Attorney for Applicants

DRO/lgs  
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021  
Telephone (202) 721-8200  
Facsimile (202) 721-8250  
January 10, 2002

**A CONTENT DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM AND A REFERENCE SERVER**

*This application is a continuation-in-part under 35 U.S.C. section 120 of U.S. application Serial No. 09/453,528 filed December 3, 1999 which is incorporated herein by reference.*

The present invention relates to a content distribution  
5 system for realizing a content distribution service including  
a distribution server for fee-paying distribution of digital  
contents, and a reference server.

**BACKGROUND ART**

Content distribution services used for fee-paying  
10 distribution of digital contents are one of a number of  
network businesses at present receiving a great deal of  
attention from the music industry. An example of such a  
service is Electronic Music Distribution (EMD). A large  
number of corporations and individuals are participating in  
15 EMD, with the aim of taking advantage of the new business  
opportunities that it offers. A conventional distribution  
system that realizes EMD includes a user terminal, a  
distribution server, and a billing server. Such a system  
distributes music contents for a fee, the music contents  
20 having been encoded using an audio compression codec such as  
MP3 (Moving Picture Experts Group 1 Audio Layer 3), Dolby AC-3  
(Digital Audio Compression) or AAC (Advanced Audio Coding).

A user accesses a Web site by inputting an URL (Uniform